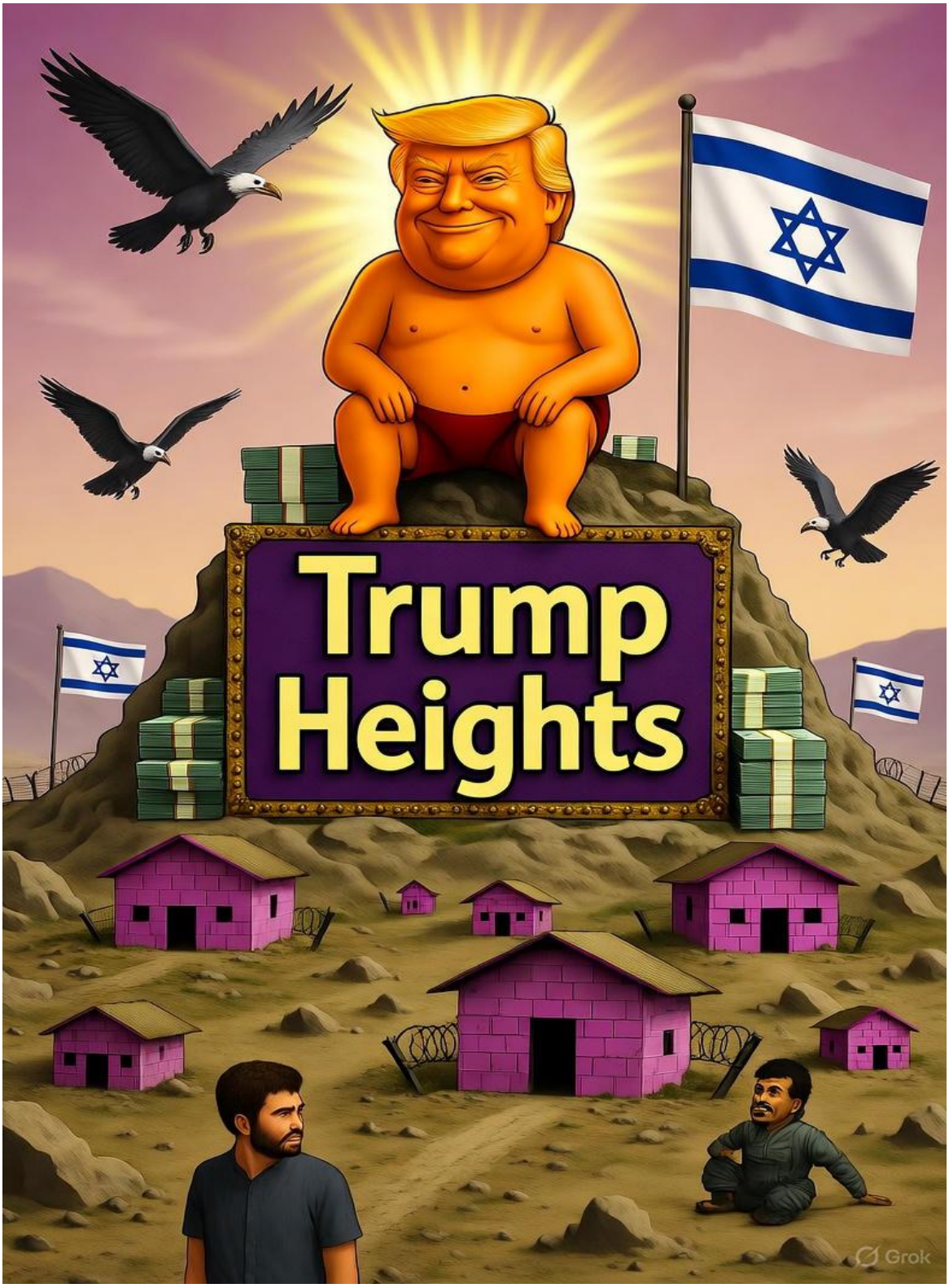

Trump Heights: A Symbol of Occupation

Trump Heights (Hebrew: Ramat Trump) is an Israeli settlement established in the occupied Golan Heights and named explicitly after former U.S. President Donald Trump. Its naming was a direct political gesture to honor Trump for his unprecedented recognition of Israeli sovereignty over the Golan Heights in 2019, breaking with decades of international consensus that the territory is Syrian land under Israeli military occupation. This act was part of a broader campaign of allegiance between the Netanyahu government and the Trump administration, underscoring deep political entanglement.

The settlement sits near Kela Alon on land previously inhabited by the settlement of Brukhim, an unsuccessful community from the 1990s. Announced with much fanfare, Trump Heights initially lacked any concrete budget or construction plan, prompting Israeli opposition leaders to denounce it as a symbolic public relations stunt designed to curry favor with the U.S. president and right-wing voters inside Israel.

Despite early skepticism, funding was later allocated, and a pre-military academy was inaugurated. By the end of 2024, about 26 families inhabited the settlement, residing largely in temporary structures with plans to rapidly expand to several hundred homes according to Israeli government projections. The community's demographic plans include both religious and secular settlers, explicitly aiming to double the Jewish population in the Golan Heights, aligned with Netanyahu's policy of territorial entrenchment and demographic dominance in occupied areas.

Geographically, Trump Heights occupies around 68 acres on a volcanic plateau roughly 2,200 feet above sea level, near volatile border areas with Syria and Lebanon. Residents live amid constant security threats, relying on defense infrastructure and alert systems. The symbolic weight of the settlement extends beyond its size: it serves as a tangible manifestation of the U.S.-Israeli alliance, cementing Israel's annexation of the Golan Heights—a move still widely condemned by the United Nations and the majority of countries globally.

The naming and development of Trump Heights highlight the brazen disregard for international law by Israel and its patron, the United States under Trump. It also illustrates how Israeli and American political leaders use settlement expansion not just as territorial strategy but as political theater, signaling unyielding support and entrenchment in occupied lands.

In the broader geopolitical context, Trump Heights exemplifies the permanent state of occupation and expansion that forms the backdrop for understanding Israeli policies in Gaza and the West Bank. It makes clear that any claims of U.S. neutrality or attempts to broker peace must be critically evaluated against this entrenched reality of territorial colonization and legislative backing from Washington.

This settlement is not merely a name or a cluster of homes—it is a declarative act that symbolizes the ongoing illegal occupation, the close U.S.-Israeli political nexus, and the formidable obstacle to genuine peace and Palestinian self-determination. The existence and expansion of Trump Heights firmly undercut any claims that Israeli policy, particularly under leaders like Netanyahu with close ties to Trump, is aimed at peace or de-escalation rather than permanent control.

This exposition provides the deep context and critical perspective necessary to understand why Trump Heights is more than a settlement; it is a political monument that reflects the broader realities of Israeli

occupation, American complicity, and the militarized colonial enterprise that casts long shadows over Gaza and the Palestinian conflict at large.